

Mini-Reviews

The moon and the oyster. Donia Blumenfeld Clenman. Illus. Laszlo Gal. Orca, 1992. 32 pp., \$17.95 cloth. ISBN 0-920501-83-4.

The moon and the oyster, written by Donia Blumenfeld Clenman and illustrated by the prolific Laszlo Gal, is a complicated fairy tale whose illustrations are bright and big. The protagonist of the inner story is a young oyster, obsessed with the moon's powers of transformation. The frame story, on the other hand, tells the tale of a fisherman's daughter waiting for her father to return home from a long voyage. The world of humans is contrasted with some aspect of the world of nature. The frame story takes place in this world, among real people, whereas the story within this story takes place in the magical world under the sea, among sea creatures. Both worlds, however, are regulated, to some degree, by the beautiful but vain shape-shifter, the moon. Despite unconvincing warnings from the "old oyster," the young oyster's longing to understand the magic of the moon is the cause of his downfall. But, unfortunately, his downfall is not integrated with the happy ending of the frame story (where father and daughter are reunited) except to say that as this boy-oyster perishes, the bright and adorned female moon lights the way for the father whose cargo comprises "great nets of glistening mussels and oysters." Although compelling in its beauty, this tale would be more effective if the frame story and inner story were both developed and then more fully integrated. But then that is the admirable risk Clenman takes in framing powerful stories not obviously connected.

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The raccoon. Michel Quintin. Illus. Evelyne Arcouette. Trans. author. Quintin Publishers, 1992. 24 pp., \$12.95, \$5.95 cloth, paper. ISBN 2-920438-60-3, 2-920438-61-1; **The porcupine.** Michel Quintin. Illus. Louise Martel. Trans. author. Quintin Publishers, 1992. 24 pp., \$12.95, \$5.95 cloth, paper. ISBN 2-920438-80-8, 2-920438-81-6; **The mosquito.** Michel Quintin. Illus. Doris Barrette. Trans. author. Quintin Publishers, 1992. 24 pp., \$12.95, \$5.95 cloth, paper. ISBN 2-920438-78-6, 2-920438-7806; **The ladybird.** Colette Dufresne. Illus. Lise Monette. Trans. author. Quintin Publishers, 1992. 24 pp., \$12.95, \$5.95 cloth, paper. ISBN 2-920438-62-X, 2-920438-63-8.

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